

HELENA CARWRIGHT CARLSON  
and  
HILDA CARLSON RUBERG  
Fifth Interview

Interviewed by:  
Karen Purtee

Oral History Project  
Latah County Museum Society

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# I. Index

HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON  
HILDA CARLSON RUBERG

Helena: Troy; b. 1899  
schoolteacher, homemaker

Hilda: Troy; b. 1893  
farmwife, cook for thrasher crew 2 hours

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00	1	Hilda's family coming to Troy, Nov. 1912 to farm in Big Meadow. Mud in the streets of Troy, clap board house had to be remodeled. Hilda and two sisters go to Spokane to work as housekeepers. Father sells firewood in town.
05	3	Housekeeping in Spokane. Thursday afternoon off. Met future husband at a dance - he had relatives in Troy. Always had the most responsibility at home being the oldest daughter. Mother worked outside, Hilda worked inside. Father's reasons for coming. Mother liked Troy because it reminded her of Norway, her homeland.
09	5	Little Sister Fern burned to death in 1918. The day before had been a family reunion with pictures taken. In Dakota, kids climbed up on the windmill, Hilda gets her finger tip cut off in the windmill hook-up. Getting in trouble in school for something she hadn't done. Winters in the Dakotas. Helena and sister on the frozen snow in Troy.
22	10	Mother's children all born at home. Helena and sister sent away when sister is born. Didn't know mothers were pregnant, secrecy of childbirth - no discussion with adults about facts of life. Helena hid in the closet when first menstrual period came. Helena too embarrassed to watch birth of kittens. Children were better off without knowledge, they enjoyed being children.
31	14	Hilda describes her play, harvesting imitated. Chores included dishes and scrubbing the wood floors.
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Helena Cartwright Carlson  
Hilda Carlson Ruberg

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Side B (continued)		
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08	37	Hilda's mother was a good hostess and served lots of good food. Fattigman, "poor man's cake" - a Norwegian recipe. Mother's cooking, some about mother and father. Posing for portraits. Ladies' employment opportunities: housekeeping, teaching, clerking in a store. Knee pants for boys, the stylish tight sheth dresses.
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00	48	Raising beans, farmers' economics after WWI, depression. Selling wheat at 22¢ a bushel during depression so she can buy her girls some Christmas gifts. Sold butter, had people follow her into the store to buy hers. How she made butter. Helena's creamery tales. Hilda's chores to keep the farm running. Hauling water to Burnt Ridge.
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Helena Cartwright Carlson  
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Side D (continued)

girl was marked and an exception. Hilda's chores before her baby was born.

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Hilda and her husband fishing. What Troy looked like in 1912; horses up to their knees in mud. Raised strict by mother.

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Milking a responsibility not entrusted to all the children. Ed's tricks in milking. Ed wears a dress to fool the cow. Mother's tumor turns out to be sister Fern.

with Karen Purtee

June 19, 1976

## II. Transcript

After I was well started, I discovered that I was labeling the pages Cartwright instead of Carlson- so I just kept on!

HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON/HILDA CARLSON RUBERG

This conversation with HILDA CARLSON RUBERG and HELENA CARTWRIGHT CARLSON, sisters-in-law took place on June 19, 1976. The interviewer was KAREN PURTEE.

KAREN PURTEE: Okay, start with your family and then maybe how you got here  
or why.

HILDA RUBERG: Well, my father had been out here during the summer and he bought this farm out here in Big Meadow and then in November, he brought the whole family out. There were eleven children at that time and we landed in Troy on November the 12th- no- what was it?

HELENA C. CARLSON: August.

HR: Huh?

HCC: It was in August.

HR: No, it was November, 1912. And so when we got here it was at night and we had to stay in a hotel down here and in the morning got somebody to take us out in a hack, you know, and the mud was hub deep in the streets of Troy. And we drove out there, it was three miles out there and <sup>then</sup> my brother had come up first. He came out with the carload of stock, you know, horses and cattle and so on, so he was already out there. And the house that we moved into was just nothing but these up and down boards with the <sup>planks</sup> on the cracks. And we had to fix up the house, so they relined the house inside and papered it and sided it on the outside to keep warm during the winter. And so then, in January I and my two sisters went to Spokane to find work, you know. <sup>We were</sup> A very large family we couldn't all live at home.

LP: You were about nineteen then?

HR: Yeah, I was nineteen. And we did housework just like everybody else in those days. around; we went to Spokane to do housework. You could always get it. <sup>We were there about a year and a half</sup> and then I married. Then we moved out to Troy; bought a farm out from Burnt Ridge and lived out on Burnt Ridge up until '48, but then I lost my first hus-



band in '39 - no in '31- and I remarried again in '36, but I still lived out on the Ridge. Well then, we sold out in '48.

KP: Your husband wasn't from Troy, then?

HR: Not the first husband, but he had relatives at Troy. I met him at Spokane. At that time I didn't know he had relatives at Troy.

The Kellebergs, like Mrs. Ernest Anderson and Oscar Kelleberg, <sup>were his cousins,</sup> and those,

KP: You came from North Dakota?

HR: Yes, Hope, North Dakota.

KP: By train?

HR: By train. <sup>It WAS</sup> A two and a half day trip out on the train.

KP: That was a long time for a big family.

HR: Yes.

KP: Were you the oldest girl then?

HR: I was the oldest girl, yeah. Ed was older than I was. <sup>But</sup> I was the oldest girl. And then of course, they had the farm, you know, just like anybody else <sup>did</sup> out here.

HCC: <sup>And wood.</sup> We cut wood.

HR: Yeah, well, Ira never did cut any wood.

HCC: I mean out on the farm out there.

HR: Oh, yeah, the folks out there, they cut wood to make the <sup>iv</sup> living, to haul to town to sell. It was just a farm with just a few acres cleared, you know, and then it didn't take very long til they had several acres, maybe 100 acres cleared that they farmed.

KP: The boys could do it?

HR: Yeah, my dad and Ed and the other boys, you know. And after they got land enough cleared, then of course, the boys went to the woods to work.

KP: But your father stayed and farmed?

- HR: Oh, yeah, he stayed and farmed. And my mother died in '22. And so he farmed a couple of years afterwards. *Then he sold it.*
- KP: What type of duty did you have when you went to Spokane and became a housekeeper?
- HR: Oh, we just did the regular housework, you know. Did the cooking and kept the house up, the whole thing. And we always had Thursday afternoon off to go to town.
- KP: Did they give you Sunday off, too?
- HR: Well, sometimes you had Sunday afternoon off, but sometimes you had to be there, they had company, you know. Had to cook. But we could have Sunday afternoons off, too.
- KP: And they had a place for you to live, too?
- HR: Oh, yes, we lived right in the house. It was kinda fun, you know.
- KP: Did you work for more than one?
- HR: It was one mostly the entire time. I started out at one place, you know, and oh, I liked it there but I didn't like it as well- I thought if I could, you know. But the backdoor neighbor wanted me over there. She had a girl working for her and she was leaving and she wanted me to come over there to work for her, so I did that. Yeah, they were awful nice to me. *How* did I meet my man? It was at a dance hall! (Laughter) Yeah, isn't that funny? And he <sup>happened to</sup> had <sup>be</sup> Troy relatives. I didn't know that when I met him.
- KP: Isn't that funny? Is that one of the things you did on your Thursday afternoon off, was to go dancing?
- HR: Yeah, Thursday evenings, because we had the whole afternoon off. It was Thursday evenings that we'd go to dances. I know there were several girls from Troy working up there. We all met downtown, see and went to the dances.

- HC : Her mother used to brag about it, she says, "Hilda got the best man in the whole country, and Mabel got the second best!" (Laughter)
- KP: That's nice. Did you have a lot of responsibility at home because you were the oldest girl?
- HR: Oh, yes, I had to do more because the others were younger than me. If any of the neighbors needed any help they always went to help the neighbors, you know, but I was always the one at home. Had to take care of the little kids <sup>and do the cooking</sup> and helped around, you know. My mother always did so much outside work.
- KP: Oh, did she?
- HR : Uh-huh. Yeah, you know, we milked a lot of cows and so on and had big gardens and all that and she was outside working, and I had to help inside. And she worked outside. We were all busy all the time.
- KP: Do you have any idea how your father found out about this part of the country?
- HR : Well, he just thought he wanted to go out West and he went to Oregon first; he went to Burns, Oregon. He'd heard about that country and he got out there and saw them rounding up jackrabbits! (Chuckles) And he got out of there! And so he came to Moscow, then he came down to Troy and he met Mr. Duffy- they belonged to Mr. Duffy and so he just decided he couldn't go back home without buying something. He thought that he had to have something, or we were going to be disappointed. And he just paid so much down because he thought he wasn't going to keep it, and came back and Mother was so happy about it, you know. And so when the time came <sup>to go</sup> he didn't want to go and she says, "We're going!" (Chuckles) And she liked it so well out here, she was from Norway, and she said it just reminded her of Norway.

KP: Oh, all the green trees?

HR: All the green trees and everything.

HC: And then there were a lot of other Norway people here, too.

HR: Uh-huh. Lot of Scandinavians around here. They learned to like it, though, he learned to like it, too, but it was a lot of hard work for him. He was used to farming, wasn't used to the sawing tall timber.

KP: Your brother mentioned that you had a little sister that died.

HR: Yes, she died- I think she was only four. She died in '22.

KP: The same year as your mother?

HR: No, my mother died in '23. I think mother died in '23. No, Fern died in 1918, Mother died in '22. She was born in 1914, she was born after we came out here. And she got burned, you know. Yeah, the day before, on Sunday, <sup>THIS WAS</sup> on Sunday we'd all had a reunion, the first time the whole family had all been together <sup>at one</sup> time. My brother was in the navy and he was home, and of course, my sister worked in Spokane and Mabel, my other sister lived over in Montana, and we all got together, went down to Troy and had our picture taken on Monday. And the next morning, of course my brother in the navy had took the train that evening and went back to the east coast and the next morning my sister and my mother were upstairs making beds and Fern just got out of bed. She'd just woke up and went downstairs, you know, and of course they <sup>stayed</sup> upstairs, and as she went downstairs she went on out to the front porch and was playing with the dog out there and on her way out she'd picked up some matches I guess, and was lighting matches on the front porch, and I guess the head flew off of the match, you know, and in her nightgown and they heard her screaming and they run down and she couldn't get in

the front door because it was hooked, she had to run clear around the house and the flames was just up above her head, you know, and they pulled her nightgown off of her but she died a couple of days after.

KP: What did they do for people then who were burnt?

HR: Well, there <sup>wasn't</sup> no doctor in town and they phoned to Moscow but i guess it just happened that a doctor happened to come through town and was going to locate here and somebody said, there was a doctor in town, so he came out there. And he couldn't do very much for her. And she was so badly burned all around her body here and her hair and her eyebrows singed off and her lips were burned, you know. It was burned so deep that it absorbed poisons inside, or something.

HC: She lived about two days.

HR: Yes, this happened Tuesday morning and she died Wednesday evening. She was such a cutie.

HR: Uh-huh.

KP: Yes, I remember seeing her picture. That must have been hard on your mother.

HR: Oh, it was. It was awful hard on her.

KP: I've heard some people say that half the children lived with all the diseases, but she had all her children.

HR: And they all lived to quite a while, too, you know.

HC: And didn't they say with all those children and never a one had a broken bone?

HR: Uh-huh.

KP: Until you broke yours. My goodness, that comes from good living!

HR: And we did wild things like climbing up onto- that was in Dakota that they climbed up on the windmill.

- HR: Oh, yeah, I was up there, too! Couldn't get down.
- HCC: She has a broken finger to prove it.
- HR: Yeah, had that cut off in a windmill.
- KP: Oh, no! Really!
- HR: The time they got up on the roof. Of course Mother wasn't home and neither was Dad, he was working in the field and my brother climbed up- it was kind of a house under the windmill, they cut the ground feed with the windmill too and the grinder was down under and when you climbed up the wall to get up to the rim and of course the eaves came this way and you had to get over it you know, and get up and so Ed went clear up to the top of the windmill, I didn't, I sat on the roof and when he came to get down you know, I couldn't get down, I couldn't get over the eaves of the roof, so I was sitting there crying when my mother came home! (Laughter) So she helped me down and give me a whipping!
- KP: You'd think you'd learned your lesson. Was it when you were up on there that you got your--?
- HR: No. That was afterwards. This is where the windmill hooked up to the pump, you know, the windmill was idling and it wasn't hooked up to the pump and of course, there's a hole where you stick the bolt in to hook it and Ed just put his finger in the hole and when he got to the hole where it went through he closed that and it would go up this way and come down and I was going to do it and I didn't pull my hand out and my finger went through the hole and it cut it off! (Chuckles)
- KP: Sounds to me like Ed was a little devil!
- HR: He could think of more things. He must have had fun.
- HR: He did have fun.
- HCC: Course, reading that letter that you wrote to <sup>him</sup> about taking the



horse- taking him home- I've forgotten the names of the people, the girl that had the buggy and was going to give you a ride-

HR: Oh, yes, that was Mamie Dunn.

KP: What's that all about?

HR: The teacher had spanked me for something that I didn't do and we was getting ready to go home from school and Bell Thomas was jealous that Mamie Dunn was going to take us home, see, so she went up and told the teacher, the teacher was her aunt, see, and she said that Mamie was going to take Hilda and Eddie home, and she said, "No, Mamie's got to go home and Hilda and Eddie's got to walk home." And she came down and told me that and so I said to Bell, "Well, I guess if Mamie wants to take me home"- we were only six years old, you know, "If Mamie wants to take me home, why I guess she can." And Bell went up and told the teacher that I'd called her an old fat *sausage bodice* I couldn't think of saying anything like that. So the teacher came down behind the barn there and put her across her lap and spanked me. And so she said Mamie had to go home, so I ran all the way home across the field. They took Ed home but they let him off about a quarter of a mile from home, you know. And I got home before Ed did. I ran all the way. And we told her, too, what happened so Mama got mad and hitched up the horse and buggy and went over and told the teacher off! (Chuckles) She had a right to do that. That was the only spanking I ever got.

HCC: You didn't deserve that, I know.

The other girl really deserved it for telling a lie. <sup>KP:</sup> There's a lot of things that jealousy will do to little kids.

You'd finished school then by the time you came out here.

HR: Oh, yeah. Of course, I never went any further than the eighth grade, you know.

KP: In those days, that was good, wasn't it?

HR: Oh, yeah.

HCC: And two months was all *in a year*.

HR: When you first started school you only had two months a year, when you first started. And I think we only went to school nine months a year about one year. And then we went for seven months and two months.

HCC: I remember in that letter you was telling that you'd only had two months of school.

KP: Was that because of the weather in the Dakotas?

HR: Well, I don't know why it was. *HC:* That's what they used to say about Dakota, people asked you if you stayed in Dakota and you said, yes. Well, how long were you there? Two winters and a summer. The weather was so violent during the winter. They had regular blizzards and just blew across and people couldn't travel.

Did you remember that?

HR: Oh, yes, I remember when we drove to school and we had three miles and we drove in a cutter, couple of horses, *HC:* and there was a lot of snow and it just blew. Even Dad said covered the fences and everything so you couldn't even see that there was a fence. And they drove right on top of that.

HR: Yeah, and there wasn't very many fences where we lived, you know, nobody fenced in their fields so if you came to a big snowdrift or something you could kind of drive around it, you know because there were no fences to stop you.

KP: No fences to stop the snow either! . . .

HR: But I know I saw snowdrifts that high right in the barnyard, you know, that was ten feet high that we used to coast down. One year

the snow was so deep that it drifted around the house and you couldn't see out the windows and they had to climb up the bank to get out to get to the barn to do the chores and they finally cut a tunnel to the barn in order to get out there and do the chores.

KP: No wonder you came to Troy!

HR: There was snow here, too, but then it didn't drift and they didn't have the wind.

HCC: The first year we were out here, wasn't it that first year, that they had six feet on the level?

HR: Yeah, uh-huh, six feet and it was just beautiful. The snow would be about that high on top of each fence post and it looked just like a Christmas card. The trees out there, it was <sup>just</sup> beautiful.

HCC: But I don't know, then that was the spring too I guess, either that spring, because it started melting and they had the crust on the snow and everybody had so much fun on the crust. They could coast right over the snow. Walk on it. I remember when Elva and I first discovered it, that was our first experience with crust. We went out there and very carefully, and then we got down on our stomachs and crawled around and we didn't break through. And finally we tried it by walking . . . and we just discovered we could run on it. And we were like a couple of fairies <sup>dancing around</sup> and ran on the snow, and it was moonlight, too. Beautiful. And we were out there sailing around. "We can walk on the snow"!

KP: Is that what they call the silver thaw or the silver crust?

HR: Silver thaw, I think. <sup>HCC:</sup> Yeah, I supposed it had rained and one thing and another. The snow had settled by that time and it was packed. <sup>frozen</sup> And then So it was really quite exciting.

KP: Did your mother have all her children at home?

With a doctor? Or midwife?

HR: Yes, they were all born at home.

KP: Did she have doctors come?

HR: Sometimes and sometimes not.

KP: Depended on if he was around?

HR: Well, I know she had a doctor for Alice and Frances, but the others I <sup>can't</sup> remember <sup>but</sup> they were all born at home. But she'd have somebody come in, you know. A woman come in.

KP: You weren't old enough when the rest came along to help her?

HR: Oh, no.

KP: What did they do with the rest of the kids when she was going to have a baby?

HCC: We were all home. Oh, Yes. <sup>He!</sup>  
<sup>I remember</sup>  
 when Hester was born we were invited to go up and visit Grandmother. So we weren't at home there at the time. Ed's brother was a doctor. They didn't live too far from us, so he was down there. I remember Elva and I says, "We bet you we know what's going to happen. You bet, they're going to have a baby!"

HR: They didn't tell you, you just had to guess it.

HCC: No, no, they hadn't <sup>told</sup> a word. In those days you didn't tell people. Now the kids know all about it. They know all about it! (Chuckles)  
 But not when we were growing up, we didn't.

HR: Well, didn't you notice that there was something different about your mother?

HCC: Can't remember that I did.

HR: Can't remember that we did either. <sup>Didn't make any impression.</sup>

HCC: We saw the cows and the pigs and the cats but we never thought too much about that either. And we definitely never thought about Mother.

- KP: What was the explanation for the new baby in the house?
- HR: Well, I can't remember. I remember when Bill was born, you know, and one of the neighbor women was over there, you know, and so they said that they found him in a hawk's nest! (Laughter) <sup>HC!</sup> We were so gullible I guess that we didn't really need an explanation, I guess they just said that they had a baby sister for us. But in a way, in our little minds we kind of had a feeling we knew where the baby had come from but we never talked it over with the folks and they never talked it over with us, but my sister and I we kind of talked it over between <sup>ourselves</sup>, you know. And I remember we were just little kids and I think it was after that- no, it was before that, because we were younger, and I remember I think she said, "You know," she said, "I think I'm going to have a baby." And I said, "You!" <sup>do</sup> And she thought she was and here she was five years old!
- HR: How old?
- HC: Oh, she must have been five or six!
- KP: What made her think she was going to have a baby?
- HCC: I don't know why she thought that, she said, "You know I kind a think <sup>the baby never progressed.</sup> I'm going to have a baby." <sup>A</sup> I suppose we had kind of an idea about things because my dad always had cows, you see, and he run the bull with the cows and we saw a lot of carrying on. <sup>like that</sup> But I don't really to begin with, even that didn't make any impression particularly. Only that after while, behold, they begin to have calves, you know. And I suppose in our stupid little minds, why, there might have been sort of a connection made finally.
- KP: But you were never sat down and explained things?
- HCC: No, never.
- KP: What about <sup>a's</sup> a girl matured, when the facts of life became necessary?

HCC: Well, we were never told that either. We just got a surprise, you know. I know my mother gave me a little pamphlet to read one time. That was the only thing that was ever said about that time, you know, and she was on the watch, you know, and I remember when it first happened, why, I was scared to death. I had eaten beets that day. And I thought that was what it was. And I remember hiding in my closet and I was wondering what on earth to do. I was worrying about it and everything, I was sure it was those beets.

KP: Never eat beets again!

HCC: Never again. And I guess my mother knew that there was something, she was watching. So then she said, <sup>I'm prepared.</sup> "You just expect that," she said. Then she told me about how often it would be and everything. And that was my information. <sup>KP:</sup> Of course, now they have movies and books. And the boys get the information just like the girls, you know. <sup>HC:</sup> Then they even have, I understand, I didn't see that, but they even showed a birth on the TV, from begging to end. I don't know if they showed it to the kids or not.

KP: Yeah, they showed it at seven o'clock at night and I sat down and me and my daughter watched it.

HCC: Well, I know, I don't remember I must have been- it was after we'd come to Troy- I never did watch a birth even of a kitten. I was too embarrassed to watch that. I came in the house one day and there was the mother cat; I figured what was happening, she was giving birth to her kittens. I very gently picked her up cushion and all and put her out on the porch, I know, but I wouldn't watch because I didn't want to embarrass her! That's the closest I ever watched a birth to this day. <sup>HP:</sup> I never did watch the birth of a kitten or a puppy or anything.



- : KP: I was going to say, you know, that kids that are raised on a farm see these things, and they don't need to see it on television, but we didn't.
- HB: No, never did. Never saw cats born or anything, you know. <sup>HC:</sup> I was in my teens, I know, before- well along in my teens- when this cat, I came up on her. Of course, I've seen it on TV now. My word, they come popping out! Deer, buffalo, whatever, here they are. I've seen it on the TV.
- KP: Do you think that because children didn't have these facts available that they led a more carefree life than they do today?
- HR: I don't know, but it seems to me that they were a whole lot better off than they are today.
- KP: Better behaved.
- HCC: At least, they were children, they didn't have all of this other. We played like kids play, and we had fun, just playing. We did a lot of make-believe. We had the man and the girl <sup>were</sup> going together and we had families and everything like that, but we didn't have all this other <sup>information</sup>. And I don't think we missed it.
- HR: And even little kids now, like my- I know my great grandchildren when they get together they play that way, "You're the mama and you're the papa and you're the kids." You know. <sup>KP:</sup> At least they have them married!
- KP: What were some of the things you remember playing as a child?
- HR: Oh, let's see, we used to get out in the dirt and we were harvesting. Make little piles of dirt, you know make shocks and Ed would make a little threshing machine. He'd get a can, you know and make an engine and a separator, and then we'd put this dirt through it you know, pretending we were threshing, stuff like that. We were

farming.

KP: Just doing what your folks did, then.

HR: Yes.

KP: How about household chores as little girls? Did you have things you had to do?

HR: Oh, yes. We had to wash dishes. And I know Ed and I had to scrub the kitchen floor; it was unpainted boards, you know, and we had to scrub it. I'd scrub so many boards and he'd scrub so many boards. Yeah, we had to do chores. <sup>like that</sup> We were just little kids about eight, nine years old when we had to scrub the floors.

SIDE B

HCC: In ours we had lots of cows, a dairy, you know. So we played <sup>like</sup> that. I remember Elva and I going out in the cowyard and we had pitch gum, we couldn't buy gum then, we'd go find pitch on the trees, certain pitch was real good and we'd lay there and chew our cuds! (Chuckles)

KP: There is one other thing that I was thinking about that is really interesting to me and that is that you were a cook for the threshing crews?

HR: Um-huh.

KP: And traveled around with them?

HR: Yes, that was here in Idaho. Well, my sister and I cooked in a cook wagon in 1913. And down in the Genesee country right in the rimrocks <sup>all</sup> up above Lewiston and we threshed for one man for thirty days. <sup>the time we were</sup> down there.

KP: He must have had a big crop.

HR: Yes. We had twenty-eight men to cook for. And we had breakfast at six o'clock in the morning because they were out threshing about four thirty in the morning and at six they'd come in for breakfast and

then we had dinner at eleven-thirty and lunch again about four o'clock in the afternoon, then <sup>their</sup> supper at eight o'clock at night.

KP: Four meals!

HR: Um-huh.

KP: What kind of stuff did you cook?

HR: Oh, vegetables and potatoes and meat and desserts, you know, <sup>those</sup> ~~those~~ <sup>salads with.</sup> ~~those~~ days we didn't serve salads. <sup>And they never bought anything for us to serve</sup> And breakfast was always bacon and pan-  
cakes and eggs, you know, oatmeal, stuff like that. And of course, we baked all our own bread and everything.

KP: For twenty-eight men?

HR: Yeah, for twenty-eight men. And my sister and I slept in a tent out-  
side. So every night <sup>when</sup> we went to bed we looked around <sup>first</sup> to see if there were any rattlesnakes! (Chuckles)

KP: Did you ever find any?

HR: Never did find any, but we sure were afraid to go into the tent at night. <sup>We slept</sup> <sup>right</sup> on the ground.

KP: What was your schedule like? What time did you get up?

HR: Oh, I got up at four o'clock in the morning to get the table set, you know, and let Mabel sleep until about five-thirty, then I'd call her and I got up and got everything started you know. Course, we had to <sup>rem</sup> bake a lot of hotcakes ahead of time to get <sup>em</sup> started on.

KP: What did you do for water?

HR: Well, they hauled water. Hauled water in barrels.

KP: You didn't have to go to a spring or anything?

HR: No, we camped out in the fields, you know.

KP: Did you move often?

HR: Oh, yes. We had to move quite often.

KP: The wagon would begin to roll when you were turning the pancakes!

HR: Yes, we had a lot of steep rides.

~~HE~~: When did you bake the bread?

HR: Oh, I could make the bread in the morning. You had to have it so it could go in the oven when you didn't have a roast in there, you know. And we'd fix it so that we really baked it in the afternoon. Mix it in the morning. Seemed like it took a long time.

KP: How many loaves.

HR: Oh, I can't remember, but we made a lot of loaves. We had a great big pan, you know, about so big around and so deep that we mixed the bread in.

KP: Good sized washtub!

HR: Yeah. I did all the baking. Mable just mostly did the washing the dishes and peeling the potatoes, you know, and the vegetables.

KP: That's a lot of dishes for twenty-eight men.

Yeah. And there were two of you.

What was the setup inside these cookwagons? Did you do cooking outside or was it all inside?

HR: It was all inside. They had pretty good size and they had tables, you know, just like you'd go into a restaurant with booths, you know, tables, two men sat on each side there were several tables along.

KP: The men even ate in the cookwagon?

HR: Oh, yes, they ate in the cookwagon.

KP: It must have been a pretty big then then.

HR: It was, like a house.

KP: Oh, it was like a house?

HR: Oh, yes. It was like a house on wheels.

KP: Because I've seen some pictures and they looked so small, and I'm trying to think how you could make bread and things in such an en-

closed area.

HR: I have a picture of a cookhouse at home; you don't have it here, do you?

HCC: I should have it.

HR : It seems to me like Opal said she had them enlarged from the old photos we had taken, you know.

KP: So then one side was all seating area?

HR: Both sides, til they came down to the stove, you know.

KP: Did this have a solid roof on it?

HR: Yeah, solid roof. I think it had a shingle roof and there was windows on the outside.

(They are discussing a family picture)

KP: Now which one is you?

HR: Oh, I'm the skinny one. I looked terrible I was so thin at that time.

KP: And now, that's in style. And the mustache on your father!

And now this was Melvin, right?

Yeah, he was telling me he never could get his tie straight. <sup>HR:</sup> And that's part of the cookhouse, see. You can see what it's like..

KP: It still doesn't look too big to me.

HR: Well, it was pretty good sized, though.

KP: How many men could sit in it at once?

HR: We fed 'em all at one time.

KP: And you got all twenty-eight in the wagon-

HR: -at one time.

KP: And then you did the cooking and you waited on the tables and then you cleaned up afterwards? And you did that four times a day?

HR: Well, three times a day; we took the lunch out to the field in the afternoon, see.

KP: Oh, that was nice, gave you a change of scenery.

HR: Yes.

KP: Well, then, how did you get out to the fields? Did you just walk out with it?

HR: They had a roustabout, he came and got **us**.

KP: Oh, with a wagon.

HR: He's the one that did all the grocery shopping and all that stuff you know.

KP: Oh, I was going to ask about that, too.

HR: The roustabout, they **cab**led him.

KP: And you made up menus and told him what to get? Or he brought you something and--

HR: No, we wrote what we wanted and if he thought that we needed something else, he brought that, too.

KP: And how old were you then?

HR: I was twenty then and Mable was eighteen.

KP: For thirty days?

HR: Um-uh.

KP: Got up at four in the morning to get the tables set! That **still** doesn't look very big to me, when you think about-- You must have had a big stove.

HR: Yeah, we had a wood range, you know.

KP: Did they have a sink built in?

HR: No, we had to wash in dishpans, you know.

KP: Spread them out on the tables?

HR: Yes. This is half of the side here and the other side was that wide too. You had your <sup>row of</sup> tables there and <sup>row of</sup> tables on the other side.



- HCC: Just like a cookshack in the camps, logging camps. They were the same way.
- KP: You said twenty-eight and there was four men at each table, so you must have had at least--
- HR: There had to be a man on each side, you know, so I guess one would wind up with about two men on it.
- KP: Okay, now for breakfast we had hotcakes and eggs-
- HR: Had bacon and eggs and oatmeal.
- KP: Oatmeal. They really had their choice. And then- what was the dinner then?
- HCC: Well, you had lunch in the forenoon, didn't you?
- HR: No, we didn't have lunch because they ate breakfast at six and then dinner at eleven-thirty, you see. So at noon it was always roast beef or roast pork or maybe boiling beef or something like that, you know or meal loaf, then had potatoes and gravy and their vegetables and then desserts.
- KP: What kind of desserts did you have?
- HR: Oh, I baked pies nearly every day. Made pie every day.
- KP: I pick one day to make a pie or a loaf of bread and she did it every day.
- HR: Oh, a threshing crew they want pie every day. Made pie every day.
- KP: Did you use fresh fruit?
- HR: Yeah, we used mostly fresh fruit.
- KP: Didn't have it to dump out of a can, like we do today.
- HR: No, we didn't. We had fresh fruit. Apples and prunes and all that.
- HCC: How many pies would that take a day?
- HR: I don't <sup>remember</sup> how many pies we made but for twenty-eight men, you know, we'd cut the pies in five pieces- made about six pies.
- KP: Six pies a day!

HC:

And then lunch in the afternoon about four?

KP:

And you took that out in the field? And so that would be sandwiches?

HR:

Sandwiches and donuts.

KP:

Donuts, you made, too?

HR:

Donuts we made too. Cookies, we'd bake a lot of cookies.

KP:

I take it you didn't have time to sit down and watch anything on the television? (Chuckles)

HR:

If there'd been television we'd have never <sup>been able to have time</sup>!

KP:

And then they came in for supper; <sup>HR</sup> and what did you have for then, I'm curious to know.

HR:

Oh, about the same thing, I guess. Oh, we had steaks and pork chops and stuff like that.

KP:

Something a little bit lighter than what they'd had!

HR:

Uh-huh, and potatoes, you know.

KP:

And then did they go back to work after supper?

HR:

No. At bedtime they crawled in straw stacks! <sup>Went to sleep.</sup>

KP:

But you still had the dishes to do?

HR:

Yeah, we still had the dishes to do.

KP:

And so what time would you get to bed?

HR:

It was about ten-thirty before we'd get to bed.

KP:

And then up again at four. Gee. And they did that nonstop? Or did they take some days off?

HR:

Oh, no, unless it rained, and I don't think we had much rain.

KP:

You didn't even take Sundays off?

HR:

No. Cooked Sunday and everything.

KP:

And you didn't have any rain; thirty days straight?

HR:

Ha!

KP:

Did you have any free time to yourself or to wash your hair or go

for hikes?

HR: No, we never had hikes, but we had to wash our hair once in a while!

KP: I mean, to relax.

HR: No, there wasn't really any time to relax at all it was just work, work all the time.

KP: I believe it. And then you had to keep the place clean.

HR: Yeah, the scrubbing it too- scrubbing the floors.

KP: In between baking pies and making donuts.

HCC: <sup>Did you have indoor</sup>  
-----plumbing?  
^

HR: Well, we had to go out in the fields someplace. (Laughter)

KP: Find a small rise? To hide behind.

HR: Someplace, I guess; it wasn't private!

~~HR~~: Oh, dear, they didn't fix anything up for you?

HR: No, there wasn't anything fixed.

KP: And were your brothers on these crews, too?

HR: Yeah, <sup>Ed</sup> was on there and my dad. The others weren't old enough yet to be out there.

KP: Like this was kind of their threshing crews then, they hired the rest of the guys?

HR: No, this was a threshing crew from Troy, they were the Johnson brothers. And in those days there was people from up in this part of the country like Cains and those used to go down there and do all the harvesting, you know. They didn't have threshing machines down there, people came in and done it.

KP: This must have been a slack time of year for farmers around here then.

HR: Well, the harvest was-

KP: -was that much later.

HR: Yeah, it was later.

KP: So that they could go harvest for somebody else.

HR: Dad, you know, he had a bundle wagon and a team and Ed was sewing sacks, I believe or pitching or something, I don't know what he done.

HCC: Yeah, even my dad went down, too.

HR: Yeah, your dad was down there, too.

HCC: He had a team and bundle rack.

HR: And then somebody else had the thresher and they just kind of got together and went out.

Yes, they hired the <sup>✓</sup>men, you know, took the men all from here, all their pitchers and the bundle racks, you know the farmers- Dad had his own bundle rack and team, you know. And that's the way they did they hired them. *Like that*

HR: And then they hired the pitchers and the sack sewers.

KP: Your dad was down there, too, huh?

HCC: Yeah. He had a team.

HR: And then there was a man-

HCC: This looks like Ed there; he had a team.

HR: Did Ed have a team?

HCC: Yeah, <sup>✓</sup>I think he did. <sup>✓</sup>He's standing on the wagon.

HR: I think he was pitching.

KP: Now what was the breakdown? How many people pitched and how many people--?

HR: I think they had about eight bundle wagons, and that way there'd be about five pitchers or something, because the bundle wagons wouldn't all be out there at the same time, you see. And then there was the engineer and the fireman and then they had a man hauling water; water tank for the engine. And then there was the sack sewers and then they had a man at the machine, when the bundle teams came in they had

a man pitching the bundles into the machine. And I forget what they call those. They had to run the machine all the time you know.

KP: Not the bundle pitcher?

HR: No, it ain't the pitcher from out in the field, they were there--

KP: The bundle pitchers were out in the field and pitching into the wagon.

HR: Uh-huh. And then they had another pitcher at the machine, you know, pitching the bundles into the machine.

KP: So they'd just drive the wagon in and walk back out?

HR: Yeah. And when they got that empty they went back out for another load, and the others coming in, see. So it was just going around about all the time, they pitched in from both sides of the machine.

KP: That's a good picture of that machine, too.

HCC: I was trying to think, was it around here that Ed sewed sacks?

HR: Yeah. *Up on Burnt Ridge he always sewed sacks.*

HCC: And Melvin was talking about that.

HR: Yeah, about that being the hardest job, yeah. <sup>HR</sup> Melvin used to sew sacks, too. <sup>KP</sup> Because he had to pick 'em up and jiggle 'em around a couple of times before they sewed 'em.

HR: And carry them up to the sack pile, and boy, they weighed, you know I guess 175 or something like that.

KP: Those guys must have had quite an appetite working like that.

I'll bet you slept well at night though.

HR: Yes, we did. (Chuckles) We had a clock an alarm clock that we couldn't depend on, so I really didn't sleep too sound because I was afraid I was going to oversleep. The clock would stop; I would hear it when it would stop ticking. Then I'd shake it. (Laughter)

KP: What a way to relax, after all you did!

Your stoves then, must have been wood.

HR: Yeah.

- KP: And he brought you your water; now what else- he brought you all your groceries. Did you have a pantry-type affair where you could keep a lot of groceries? Or did he bring them every day?
- HR: No. The meat and the eggs- they'd buy the eggs by the case, thirty dozen <sup>Cases</sup>, you see. And the meat; they would make shade underneath the cookhouse, they'd hang canvasses on both sides so the sun couldn't shine in. They went to town every day, you know, but they had to keep the eggs and the meat under the cookhouse. They had boxes they'd put them into.
- KP: No refrigeration?
- HR: No, no refrigeration. It wasn't all that cool either. How about milk and stuff like that? Did they drink milk?
- HR: No, they didn't drink milk, they drank coffee. And the milk- we used canned milk all the time, and for cooking half-and-half, you know.
- HCC: (looking at picture) Here's my dad right here. Here's your dad right there and there's Ed. I got marks on 'em.
- KP: Oh, yes, I see them. Yes, you look a lot like your father.
- HCC: He was a good looking man. They thought he was a Norwegian when he came.
- KP: Yep, and there's the walrus mustache. It looks like it would be extremely dirty work.
- HR: Oh, it is dirty work. Oh, boy, they come in looking like niggers. Yeah, all that dust, you know, from the machine. Mable and I, we always put our hair in braids, you know. The only time we could spare was to do that.
- KP: Braiding the braids?
- HR: Um-huh.



- KP: And did that make extra work for keeping the cookhouse clean? Because they were so dusty, or would they clean up before they ate?
- HR: Oh, they always washed up. And we had to do the washing, too, with the towels, yes. And they had to have clean towels for all the time too.
- KP: What else are you going to think of? (Chuckles) Good gravy! Just baking bread is an all day project for me!
- HR: But you know, the men looked forward to going. They did.
- KP: Did you do this just one year then?
- HR: Yeah, just one year.
- KP: And that was all you needed!
- HR: I got married the next year.
- KP: There wasn't that much excitement there for you.
- HCC: Then she had to cook for the thresher crews ~~on~~ *Burnt Ridge*.
- HR: Then we'd have a lot of men, too, about twenty-five of 'em cook for you know.
- KP: Then how many days would that be?
- HR: Oh, we had it easy, about five days at our place.
- HCC: It took them about five days to thresh-
- HR: About four or five hundred acres. (looking at pictures)
- HR: Well, isn't that the same picture? Or is that two different pictures?
- HC: There's two different pictures. HR: There he is on the machine, but he isn't on the pitcher. That's all taken at the same time.
- HCC: This must have been the Johnson machine, because there's Fred. Alfred and Fred.
- HR: Alfred and Fred.
- HCC: And he was such a shy, coy--
- HR: Yeah, wasn't he though. This one's Alfred, over here.
- KP: Was he shy?

HR: They was both kind of shy, you know. And they never married. I don't think they ever married, did they?

HCC: I don't think so.

KP: That shy!

HCC: Either <sup>Ed</sup> wasn't in that one, or else I couldn't locate him.

KP: Did you make real good money then for cooking?

HR: Yeah, we got \$5 a day. Yeah, that was big pay. Yeah, that was worth coming home from Spokane to do, you know, because we just got \$5 a week at Spokane. And we got got \$5 a day out cooking.

KP: Was the work as hard though, what you did in Spokane?

HR: Oh, no.

KP: Or as long?

HR: No.

KP: Was it worth the extra money?

HR: Oh, yes. Sure was. We kind of looked forward to it too.

KP: Did you just take a vacation then?

HR: Yeah, come home for the summer because the folks had gotten us this job, you know with the Johnson brothers. They said they wanted us to cook for them, so we just quit our jobs there and came home. And then when it was over with we went back to Spokane again to work. We were busy all the time. We weren't home very much.

KP: When you were working as a housekeeper; what was your day like then? Did you get up at four o'clock?

HR: Oh, no.

KP: Life was a little easier?

HR: Yeah, life was a little easier. You didn't get up so early. You had breakfast about eight o'clock, you know, and then dinner at six at night. And then that was really nothing much for lunch, you know, because the man of the house, the one that I worked for, he was as-

sistant prosecuting attorney and the woman was home most of the time and they had three little kids; one went to school and the other two were home. It was just ordinary housework.

KP: You did mostly the housework? Or did you take care of the kids then?

HR: Oh, no, only if they went out, she took care of the kids. So I had nothing to do with that. In fact, it was just like living, keeping house, you know. You did just everything, you know.

KE: Keep the silverware polished?

HR: Keep the silverware polished.

KP: I was going to say; were these rather wealthy people then? I guess they must have been. Did the average family in Spokane hire somebody?

HR: Oh, everybody. Anybody that had any little prominence at all had hired girls, they called them. All the girls from Troy, you know, went up there. Annie Sandstrom and the Frisch girls and sometimes when we'd get off on Sunday, we'd go to church for the evening services, we'd meet downtown and go to church for the evening services and get together that way.

HCC: Later Hester worked up there, too. She worked for those <sup>Eric Johnson</sup> wealthy-well-to-do, and she hated it. Because she felt she was just as good as they were- <sup>she didn't</sup> <sup>want to be a</sup> servant.

HR: They didn't treat her like part of the family.

HCC: Not quite.

KP: Were you treated like part of the family?

HR: Oh, yeah. Only you didn't eat at the table with them.

HCC: I think they really treated her- they were awful good to her. I think they were good to her. She just didn't cotton to the idea of being a servant.

HR: I think most all of 'em were. They just felt like you were a member of the family. That's the way I felt. I didn't feel lowered or any-

thing by working for 'em, you know. *I felt* like I was one of the family.

KP: I was listening to some tapes by another lady and she was talking about the different things in the wealthy households- like the lady would forget to pay the milkman and things like this and skip out on some of her little bills, but entertained real lavishly. And I wondered if you had things like that.

HR: People didn't really entertain so much, you know, once in a while they had ~~some~~ in for dinner, but they really didn't entertain too much. No big parties. Well, I don't think they ever really had a party while I was there only just a dinner party, you know, and it didn't last very long.

KP: They sound like very nice people. You enjoyed yourself while you were there.

HR: Yes. Yeah, I worked there nine months, and then that was the summer I got married.

KP: So then, most of your courtship was just on Thursday evening?

HR: Yeah. (Laughter)

KP: What kind of things did couples do together? Were there shows and things?

HR: Shows at Spokane, or else a dance, you know.

KP: You always had something to do?

HR: Yeah. *Usually* the boyfriend'd take us out to supper, you know. And we'd sometimes meet some of these boys that was on the threshing crew, you know, they lived in Spokane in the wintertime, you know, and they'd take us out, you know, for supper. And a bunch of us Troy girls, like Clara Samuelson and Annie Gunderson and Mable and I, and they'd take us out for supper and then we'd go to a dance or to a show.

KP: Did they have roller skating and stuff like that then?

HR: I didn't hear of any. I suppose they maybe had it, but I don't know.

HCC: Must of kinda come on later, I think.

Yeah, I think so. I don't remember the roller skating until after-  
They used to have a roller skating rink up here.

~~HR~~: Yeah, at the round hall, or something?

HCC: Um-huh. At Palouse they had that round hall.

HR: Yeah, that big one. But that burned down. Margaret was  <sup>talking</sup>  
about that the other day, said how much fun they used to have  
when they went out there. And then they used to have some of these  
celebrities come in there and entertain, you know, these radio peo-  
ple in those times when they didn't have television, you know. Like  
was it Leslie Purcell and Hank Snow and some of those,  <sup>come in</sup> you know.  
I had a chance to go with them too, but I said, "No, I'll stay home  
and sit with the boys because I didn't trust any baby sitters."

KP: Oh, yeah! (Chuckles) Your sons, you mean? No, your grandsons.

HR: They were small and I wouldn't trust anybody with them, so I said  
I'd stay home and take care of the kids.

KP: Melvin was telling me something about oyster feeds they used to have  
on Burnt Ridge.

HR: Yeah. They'd have literary programs there, you know, every Friday  
night, we had literary programs and sometimes it'd be a basket social  
and sometimes it'd be oyster feed, you know, something like that.

KP: Big washtub. Did you do the cooking out there?

HR: No, we all helped together. All helped together.

KP: And this was for the whole community?

HR: The whole Ridge, you know. Burnt Ridge isn't so very big, you know.  
We had literary programs every Friday night and that was our enter-

tainment. Oh, we had a lot of fun.

KP: Was this at the school, or did you take turns going to people's houses?

HR: At the school. No, we never did that.

KP: Where did they have it? At the schoolhouse?

HR: Uh-huh. And they went, whole families. The whole family went, yeah. It was fun. We had programs and singing and then they'd dance afterwards. <sup>KP:</sup> And Melvin said whenever they planned the oysters he'd make sure he got up there. He liked those.

KP: And something about how they were cooked.

HR: In a boiler. *We cooked 'em in a boiler.*

KP: You mean like a washboiler?

HR: Yeah, a washboiler. <sup>KP:</sup> Put the pot up on the stove and put the oysters on.

KP: That sounds pretty good. Was it kind of like a potluck? Did everybody bring something? Or did you just all--

HR: We'd buy the oysters, you know. <sup>then</sup> Everybody chipped in to pay for the oysters, but all the farmers had milk, you know, so they'd bring the milk. And then they'd bring the other food, you know, to to with it.

KP: Why would they need so much milk?

HR: The oysters were soup!

KP: Oh, you made a chowder.

HR: Regular Oyster soup, you know.

~~HR:~~ The whole oysters?

HR: The whole oysters.

HCC: They didn't dress them either!

KP: I like that.

I'm trying to think how they were served. <sup>HR</sup> They served them in bowls.

- HR: You ever eat oyster soup?
- KP: Yeah. I didn't know it was soup. I thought maybe you all sat there and picked 'em out of the shell.
- HR: No. We cooked them. I think we bought the fresh oysters, too.
- HCC: And served them in bowls and butter'd be all over the top.
- KP: And homemade bread?
- HR: Yeah.
- KP: Sounds good. These literary programs and things like that are so interesting.
- HR: And we used to have a literary paper, you know. Each week they'd appoint somebody to write the paper. And we'd just get all the most crazy things written up about people on the Ridge, you know.
- KP: Can you remember any good ones particularly?
- HCC: Oh, I can't remember-
- HR: I remember they wrote about Alfred Sundell and of course, that was when he was young and not married and I said that he'd gone to Moscow riding on the train and he was scratching- he was baldheaded, you know, ---

## SIDE C

- HR: She was teaching (Helena) and she stayed at our place, you know, and Ed lived over- we were living on a rented farm, and Ed lived over on our place, the house was vacant - laughter and all talking together-
- KP: The two of you were going together, I see.
- Several more remarks are unintelligible.
- KP: Then what would you do? You could mimeograph enough copies or just have one copy.
- HR: No, you'd get up and read it <sup>in front of</sup> the audience. Just one paper.

- KP: Oh, just one? Just one paper?
- HR: Oh, we had big long papers. Oh, boy, several pages. <sup>Then</sup> Get up in front of the audience and read it.
- HCC: That was part of the program, you see, there were various things and one of the highlights was the weekly paper.
- KP: Well, now, you were teaching out there?
- HCC: Uh-huh.
- KP: Did you have to organize the program?
- HR: Oh, no, I didn't have anything to do about it. I guess somebody just-asked somebody- tell somebody there that night, "Now, you sing a song or you recite something or have a reading." Or something like that. have somebody just write the paper, you know.
- It would be a different one every time, you know, till you got around.
- KP: I know some of these Scandinavian gentlemen that I've talked to have real good sense of humor, but real dry, you have to listen carefully in order to catch it. I'll bet you had some real interesting papers.
- HR: We really had fun up there, we really did.
- KP: Little kids and big kids.
- HR: Yeah, everybody went.
- We always took our kids with us, you know.
- KP: You didn't have any teenage problems?
- HR: No.
- HCC: I think the TV just spoiled a lot of that. <sup>HR:</sup> And they played the ac-  
cordion, you know; who was the musicians, anyway? Because Frank wasn't old enough at that time to play the accordion, but we had music and I can't remember who the music was.
- HCC: And who was it that pounded the piano? They had a piano there, didn't they?



HCC: But who was the one that was doing it? I can't remember.

KP: Was this for the dancing?

HCC: Yes. Not regular dancing, there were schottisches, old folk dances.  
Skip-to-my-Lou.  
Virginia Reel.

HA: Schottische and then they waltzed.

KP: Did everybody dance?

HR: Well, everybody that knew how to dance did. There were some of them that didn't know how, sit around and watch.

HCC: Got just as big a kick out of that as they did participating.

HR: Yeah.

HCC: Those folk dances like that, they were just loads of fun.

KP: You'd have the little kids dancing with the adults?

HCC: They was sleeping so hard! (Chuckles)  
Sound asleep.

HA: And the recitation bench and the seats would be lined up with the kids sleeping.

KP: I was thinking about another thing and that would be the traveling preachers. Did they come out on Burnt Ridge?

HR: Sometimes we did have some out there.

KP: They used the schoolhouse and everyone'd go, just like a literary?

HR: Yeah, when they preached, they used the schoolhouse. It wasn't too often. I know one fellow, he ate at our house and I can't remember what denomination he was.

KP: Did it make any difference?

HA: No, it didn't make any difference, no, people went alright but I don't think too many of 'em went.

KP: But not too many of 'em?

HR: I think that happened more before the days that I got up there, be-

- cause I'd hear them talking about this Martin somebody, I don't remember what his last name was, would come up there, you know, he was traveling to preach, you know.
- KP: When did you go up there?
- HR: In 1914 when I went up there first, in the fall of 1914. This was an even older idea then. It was before I came there. <sup>KP:</sup> The roads were getting pretty good then and you could get into town if you were a churchgoing person. <sup>HR:</sup> We went to church in town.
- HCC: The Norwegians at that end and the Swedes at this end and ~~never~~ the two would meet! <sup>HR:</sup> But they finally got together.
- HCC: Part of them came over, but part of them never did.  
Like Mrs. <sup>Christie</sup> over here.
- KP: Did she go to Moscow then?
- HCC: She went nowhere.
- KP: Oh, nowhere.
- HCC: <sup>not go to the Swedes.</sup> She wouldn't. She was a Norwegian.  
And they resented very much that they took their church away.
- HCC: They didn't have enough membership, you know, to keep it going.
- KP: They didn't?
- Well, now, your mother was Norwegian and your father was Swedish.
- HR: Uh-huh.
- KP: Did they have any problems with ne'er the twain shall meet?
- HR: No, never. No, they went to the <sup>w</sup> Swedish church. Because Mama had friends all over town you know. Had them out there, entertained them, all the storekeepers and all that, they were out there. They just loved to go out there. And said they had the best eats!
- KP: --- in Big Meadows?
- HR: Uh-huh. Yeah, she entertained an awful lot, had those out there.

- Because she went to the Swedish church, that's where they went.
- KP: Were these basically all people that spoke Norwegian and Swedish at that time?
- HR: No, they just spoke English, you know.
- KP: Oh, they did?
- HR: Yeah they did.
- KP: Because I remember the entertainment that you were telling me about sometimes you got left out of.
- HR: Yeah, some of them did. They talked Scandinavian. <sup>HR:</sup> It might have been that folks like John Anderson, or John Olson, you remember that had the store and Carl Anderson, they might have spoken Swedish sometimes, you know.
- HCC: I remember when Elva was working at this- <sup>they were</sup> hoeing some kind of a garden I guess- and that was when- what was Esther <sup>DeLaney?</sup> Anyway a couple of the girls were out there and she was along with them and they talked Swedish, AND SHE WAS THE THIRD ONE AND ~~she~~ really resented it.
- KP: You'd wonder what they were saying.
- HR: Where would that be then?
- HCC: Well, it was out there <sup>as I remember</sup> where, <sup>Alfred</sup> Johnson plays.
- HR: Would Esther Delaney be out there? <sup>HC:</sup> No couldn't have been Esther Delene because, well, who was it? What was Ernestine's sister's name?
- HR: Olga.
- HC: She was one of 'em.
- HR: Oh, yeah. They lived out that way.
- HC: Yeah. And she was one of 'em and I've forgotten who the other one of 'em was. But those two they just
- HR: Ellen, it'd maybe be Ellen they were talking to.

- HC: Ellen that was her name.
- KP: Your mother did a lot of Norwegian and Swedish type cooking then?  
Oh, yeah. Okay, now what was the thing I just got done eating?
- HR: Fattigman. Fattigman means poor; fattig means poor. And it's a poor man's cake.
- KP: Oh, well, it's good. What other kind of things did she make?
- HR: Mother wasn't so much on cooking these Scandinavian dishes as some of the other people in North Dakota. <sup>did</sup> Like Annie <sup>Nyberg's</sup> folks. They were great on <sup>fattigman</sup>. My mother wasn't too much on that.
- HCC: I'm just trying to think: her's was just plain cookies and plain cake and things like that. Because she'd just have the table loaded with food.
- HR: Like we'd cook.
- KP: Well, then where did you pick up your recipes?
- HR: Oh, Mother, you know. Mother made a lot of Fattigman. <sup>HC:</sup> But a lot of those other Swedish dishes, she didn't. <sup>HR:</sup> She didn't even <sup>rosecaka</sup>.  
<sup>HC:</sup> I got that from somebody else. <sup>HR:</sup> I made a lot of <sup>rosecak<sup>a</sup></sup> in my day, but I didn't get my recipe from my mother. I got it from <sup>some of the Swedes</sup> out on <sup>the ridge</sup>.
- HCC: Burnt Ridge.
- HR: Uh-huh.
- KP: She was more Americanized.
- HR: Yeah, more Americanized. When she first came to this country she cooked in a hotel restaurant in Minneapolis, you know. That's where Dad met her.
- HCC: How old was she when she came from Norway?
- HR: I don't know just how old she was but she must have been nineteen or twenty, because she was twenty-four when she was married. I don't

know how long she had been here before. But anyway, when she first came she started working in the restaurant, you know, and finally she got to do the cooking.

KP: Very good. And he was a farmer?

HR: He was working in Minneapolis at that time, see. I don't know what he was doing. *Just anything he could get in those days.* And then when they moved to North Dakota, why then, he started working on a farm.

KP: He didn't go there for a homestead?

HR: He rented. The first farm he ever bought was this one out here in Idaho. They always rented there, a section ~~or~~ a section and a half of land, you know.

KP: Oh, that's a lot of land.

HR: -----by horses, you know.

KP: Do you remember when this picture was taken?

HR: This was taken in 1918.

KP: In the photographer's studio, or did he come to the house?

HR: No, at the photographer's studio.

KP: They had it <sup>set</sup> up so it looked like a room?

HR: Yeah, uh-huh.

KP: Then you'd all line up; how still did you have to stand?

HR: Oh, yeah, you have to stand still. *Nels Nelson took that picture.* No, you had to pose.

KP: She's got a pretty relaxed look to her face.

HCC: Is that Mable or Ella?

HR: I can't see without my glasses on. That's Mable isn't it?

HCC: That's Mable. Here's Ella.

HR: This is Ella, she was the wife to that fellow that came up from San Francisco, that worked with Ed in the woods.

KP: When you reached the age when you were ready to go out and find your own job then you went to Spokane?

HR: Uh-huh.

KP: And then you went to Normal school and became a teacher. Was there anything else girls did? Or were you pretty limited?

What was acceptable to society.

HCC: I think that was the main thing. You went out and worked or you went and taught. That was it.

KP: When I was down in Lewiston the other day, they have a people working sign, they have a girl that works on the ditch digging crew.

HCC: I guess too, they clerked in stores, didn't they?

HR: Who?

KP: Girls. I'm trying to think of the different jobs girls could do.

HR: Oh, yeah, they could do that.

KP: Home related, like cooking in a cookwagon.

HR: Of course, there were girls like worked down in the stores here, you know. Like <sup>Elma Smith</sup> and I used to work for the Mickelbusts. And Ellen Lethburg worked, I think, at Christie's store and so on, you know, so there was the girls working in the stores.

KP: Did they hire women in the bigger stores in Spokane, or were they all men?

HR: Mostly women, I think.

HCC: There weren't so many jobs for girls to do.

HR: No. I know Selma worked in a store in Spokane, you know. She worked for Culbertson's. I think girls got jobs easier than men did in stores. They'd have the men, of course, in the hardware departments, you know but <sup>otherwise they were</sup> girls.

KP: Did your mother make clothes?

HR: Oh, yes, she <sup>did the</sup> sewing.

But she always did all our sewing when we were kids.

KP: Did she have a machine or did she do it all by hand?

HCC: Treadle machine.

KP: This one's so pretty with the blond hair. I guess she had three blonds, get darker as you get older. And the knee pants on boys. How old did a boy have to be before he could wear long pants?

HR: Well, I think Ed and ~~Bruce~~ they were around about fifteen before they wore long pants.

KP: In other words, til they got out of school.

HR: Uh-huh. And it was a real occasion when they fell heir to a pair of long pants!. (Chuckles)

KP: What was the growing up for a girl then? Did she go from a short skirt to a long skirt?

HR: No, we never had short skirts, you know.

KP: Just the little girls were in short skirts?

HR: Yeah. They weren't short like now. They were longer than that. Our <sup>were.</sup> dresses.

HCC: What would they be? I don't know. I remember the Samuelson girls out there that <sup>was.</sup> in the days when they had these sheaths that were really tight and they were long, and then <sup>were</sup> split up the sides so they could walk.

HR: I had a dress like that too when I worked in Spokane. Came down here for the Fourth of July and I wore that dress <sup>I thought I was the best dressed one there.</sup> (Laughter) Talking while laughing.

HCC: But the dresses we wore were clean down our thigs<sup>h</sup>- I mean our legs

HR: Our calves.

HCC: Down to our ankles.

KP: Did your mother do hand work?

HR: No, she didn't have time for that. She used to knit I guess, when

she only had a few kids, you know, she used to knit our stockings all the time. <sup>finally</sup> Had to give that up too.

KP: She must have been an awfully good manager.

HR: She was. <sup>H.C.</sup> And clean- she was so clean that she wore the paint off the house every year so they had to repaint! (Chuckles) They'd paint all over in the kitchen. Right?

HR: Yeah.

HR: Then they'd paint the whole kitchen, you know, then she'd use lye and scrub it all off because it had to be clean and the next year they'd paint it again! <sup>H.P.</sup> This friend of mine <sup>from</sup> North Dakota, you know, we hadn't seen each other since we went to school in 1903, I think was the last we'd seen each other, so I got in contact with them here about three or four years ago, they lived up in Canada, and she got word of where I lived and they came down and visited me. And so, she was telling me about Mother being so clean and

Dad was <sup>Wards</sup> the medicine man, used to go out with the- sell medicine like Watkins, you know, and this was <sup>Wards</sup> medicine- you've heard of Watkins.

KP: Your father did the selling?

HR: No, this girl's father. And he was stopped at Mother's house, you know, trying to sell some medicines and you know stuff they had and Mama was painting the chairs and he said, "Oh, Mrs. Carlson you don't need to paint those chairs. A month from now you'll have all the paint scrubbed off!" (Laughter)

HCC: And that was more truth than poetry, her kitchen was so shabby she had to refinish it, and the reason why it was so shabby was because she had scrubbed it off.

HR: And this girl was telling me about this, you know. She remembered



her dad saying that *to my mother.*

KP: Did she take it as a compliment?

HR: Oh, I guess so. (Chuckles)

KP: Did she use lye?

HR: Well, she used to use lye to scrub the white board floors with,  
She might have lye in it to soften the water.

KP: Soften the water with lye?

You know what lye does to your hands.

HCC: And the time she spilled the grease.

HR: Oh, yes, she was frying donuts and spilled that hot grease <sup>on her foot</sup> and it  
cooked the flesh on her foot, you know and it peeled off, but she  
didn't think about the foot she just said, "Oh, my floor!"  
You couldn't get the grease off of the floors, it soaked in, you  
know and boy, you had to use lye for months and months to get all  
that grease out.

KP: And she didn't think about that foot.

HCC: Yeah, she had to walk around with her foot up on a chair. <sup>HR:</sup> She had  
her knee on a chair and shoved the chair around, you know. <sup>HR:</sup> The only  
thing she could think about was, "my floor, my floor!" I guess she  
had just finished scrubbing it and it was a job; bare boards.  
Did they ever get linoleum on the floor: was it always bare boards?  
I can't remember.

HR: Well, they had linoleum out here.

HCC: They did, huh?

HR: But this was on one place that they lived, it was just the bare boards  
you know. And it was such a big floor, too that they couldn't afford  
to buy linoleum for it.

KP: What did she die of? Or do you know?

- HR: Well, it was mostly from goitre trouble, I think. And she had been bothered with her goitre anyhow, and she went to Clarkston, a fellow down there said he could cure it, you know, so she went down there and she wasn't down there very long before she died. She had one of those <sup>ingrown</sup> goitre, and he said he could cure it without operating on it. And she was there, I think, only about three days and she died.
- HCC: She wasn't there very long.
- KP: Was she afraid of an operation?
- HR: No, I don't think so, didn't realize that she did <sup>n't</sup> need it, you know. I don't know whether they operated too much for ingrown goitre anyway at that time. I think it was kind of a risky thing to do. But he said he could cure her, he had some kind of a way. <sup>His name</sup> was Dr. Potter and I think he was just a quack is what I think he was.
- HCC: How did I get the impression that she had carcinoma of the liver? <sup>What did they put on her death certificate?</sup>
- HR: I don't know, I think that they put cancer of the liver, but I don't think she had it though.
- She'd have been in terrible pain if she'd had cancer of the liver, you know.
- But I think that's what they put on - the doctor put on there, but I don't think she had it.
- HCC: I remember that when they asked <sup>if</sup> Ed <sup>had</sup> any cancer, I think that I put down that his mother had died of cancer because I know it was on her death certificate.
- HR: Yeah, I think it was, because I heard something about it.
- KP: There are two stories about <sup>area</sup> Burnt Ridge <sup>n</sup> I wonder if you've ever heard 'em; about the wild man of Burnt Ridge?
- Hr: THE WILD MAN?

- KP: Uh-huh. There was supposed to have been hermit or something that lived down in the canyon off of Burnt Ridge, and they called him the wild man of Burnt Ridge. And he's kind of a legend, and I don't know if that's before your time or if you ever heard of him.
- HR: It must have been before my time. <sup>It seems to me</sup> I've heard of somebody living down there but I don't know who it was.
- KP: I don't know if anybody knew who he was!
- HR: Well, I've heard that there was someone who lived down in the canyon but I never heard very much about it.
- KP: And then there also was supposed to have been a hanging down in there. On Burnt Ridge someplace. They found a man who had been hung by vigilantes and they didn't know who the man was or why.
- HR: <sup>Thinking</sup> I've heard that, too, but I don't know anything more about it than you do.
- KP: Okay, I was just asking. Were there some interesting people out there? Like down on Dry Creek they had Big Anderson. You were out there, did you hear anything or stories?
- HCC: No, never heard 'em. No, I don't know of anything mysterious.
- KP: Curious things or unusual things that people talked about or people?
- HCC: No, I never have.
- KP: There was a fellow named Wild Davey that used to come down from Park, used to come through to Troy. Lot of people talk about him. And Big Anderson, from out by Dry Creek?
- HCC: No, I don't know him either.
- HR: Well, they called those two Andersons out on Burnt Ridge the Big Andersons, George, I mean Swanee and Ora. Didn't they speak of them as the Big Andersons.
- HCC: Yeah, but they weren't odd at all. They were really human! But

they did speak of them as the Big Andersons.

KP: Why was that?

HCC: Because they were big.

HR: They were <sup>Ruth Kelleberg's brothers.</sup> ~~KP~~ The Big Andersons, because they were the biggest Andersons.

HCC: Cause like Ernest was the Little Anderson and they were the Big Andersons!

HCC: They was Andersons: you see, when you came to Troy, you had to put son on the end of your name to be popular- or to feel at home.

KP: Cartwrightson!

HCC: Yeah, because everybody they said had a son on the end of it. Benson  
They'd start in Anderson, <sup>Benson</sup> and Carlson, and ~~Olson~~ and they were all sons, you know. And why were they sons? Because they were the sons of Andrews, so it was Andrewson, and he was the son because he ~~was~~ Nelson so he was Nelson. And if they were Carlson it was because he was the son of Carl. And Ben's son was Benson. And Ole- that was Ole's son, so it was Olson.  
Guess that was changed then, they must have been shortened, because some of them used to be Oleson.

I wonder if it was changed to Olson. Still some were Oleson.

HR: Yeah, there are Olesons, <sup>HC</sup> ~~B~~ But I guess they changed it. Then like out here when these Carlsons came out here, there was so many Carlsons that that he changed his name to Rose.

KP

Who?

HC: Oscar. What was his first name?

HC: Carl Rose, you mean?

HC: Uh-huh. Carl Rose.

He didn't want to be Carlson he changed his to Rose when he came out here.

KP: He didn't like that name, huh?

- HCC: No, so his children were Rose.
- HR: I had forgotten all about that.
- HCC: There was *Atley* Carlson, Oscar Carlson and Phil Carlson and he wasn't going to be another carlson Olson so he <sup>went to the court,</sup> had it changed to Rose, when he became a citizen.
- HR: Uh-huh.
- HCC: Carl Carlson, which one?
- KP: Get your mail mixed up. My grandfather did that. Too many Peter Neilsons in Tacoma so he took his mother's name, which was *Krough*. So, I got stuck with that. My grandfather <sup>HCC: I</sup> told Ed when we got married, yours is such a common name, why don't you take mine? Now, that's quite common in these days, you can do it now, but not then.
- KP: He didn't take kindly to that joke, huh?
- HR: Like my first marriage, we were the only name in the telephone book by Dragsted. My first husband was named Dragsted. And Ruberg now, we're the only Ruberg in the Spokane telephone book.
- KP: Is that right?
- HR: Yeah.
- KP: There's a Ruberg or two here. Isn't there in Troy?
- HR: No, I don't think so. No, there isn't <sup>very</sup> many Rubergs.
- KP: You were married in 1914?
- HR: 1914.
- KP: And you moved out to Burnt Ridge?
- HR: Um-huh.
- KP: Did you buy the place?
- HR: Yes.
- KP: Tell me about your first home then and how you set up housekeeping.
- HR: Oh, yeah, we didn't have very much to set up with. But we bought

forty acres out there and there was the house so we got what we needed, a stove, you know and table and chairs and beds and that's all we had for the first year, I guess and we'd keep adding a little bit more each year, you know.

KP: Forty acres? Was that enough to farm?

HR: It wasn't, but we rented some besides. <sup>started in on that.</sup> Bought that, that was home.

Then we finally lived there seven years and then we moved to a rented farm, it was my husband's uncle's farm. <sup>a golden wedding anniversary tomorrow.</sup> The father of the girl that's having a

So we lived there then from 1921 til- and he died in '31 but I still lived there til '35 and then I sold out, had an auction sale, you know, sold my stock and my farm machinery and things like that and then I went out and worked for a year. Oh, Yes, then in 1936-

KP: You mean, you kept operating the farm?

HR: Yes, uh-huh. Yeah and I had to hire men to-

KP: You just hired men?

HR: Uh-huh. Melvin worked for me. And then we had to have other men too in the fall, you know too, in bean harvest I think we had seven, eight men all the time and then we had the combine and Melvin run the combine. So we put the crops in in the spring-

KP: Was this unusual for a widow to keep her farm going in those days?

HR: Well, it might be, I don't think there's very many of them that do it.

KP: It must have been an awful lot of work.

HR: Oh, it was a lot of work.

KP: You had to be very knowledgeable.

HR: Oh, yes.

KP: Or you would have gotten taken.

SIDE D

SIDE D

- HR: -- Dad was staying with me at that time, too and so he was talking to Frank Green there in Myckelbust's store and I walked past the store there and Frank Green says to Dad, he says, "You know, that's the best businesswoman in this country."
- KP: Oh, my, that's a compliment.
- HR: Yeah, it was. So I managed alright.
- KP: Then you must have had more than forty acres?
- HR: Oh, yes, we farmed the Otter place and then we bought the Porter place out in the canyon, too, 160 acres, but there was about forty acres of farm land on that, too, then we farmed 160 acres of his uncle's.
- KP: So you had a big spread to run then.
- HR: Oh, yes.
- KP: And you had beans?
- HR: Oh, yes, they raised beans in those days. Now they raise peas. We just had acres and acres and acres of beans and that's what we made our money on.
- KP: Beans. What kind of beans?
- HR: White beans. Navy beans. And that's where the kids got their start. They went out and hoed beans. <sup>HR:</sup> They went out and hoed in the summertime, we had about or eight bean hoers in the summertime out hoeing the beans.
- KP: By hand?
- HR: Yeah. You see they're planted- you see the rows are about this far apart, see. So we'd get bean hoers out there and hoe all the weeds out <sup>of 'em</sup> in the summertime.
- KP: What's that about two feet?
- HR: Yeah. And there was just acres and acres. *Maybe a hundred and fifty acres.*

- KP: Beans?
- HR: Yes. It didn't take very long though because they cultivated them too and there wasn't too many weeds. They cultivated between, they just had to hoe closer to the beans in the rows.
- HCC: Even I went out and hoed beans.
- KP: I remember one, I guess it was a lady down in Kendrick that was talking about that, how long that field would look! \*Chuckles And it got looking longer as the day got hotter.
- HR: I don't know if they raise beans down there <sup>any more</sup> or not, but they don't raise them around here any more, they started in with peas, you know.
- KP: Why is that?
- HR: Oh, not <sup>so</sup> much work and the beans was kind of a particular thing too, you know, if you got an early frost they froze and then you lost your crop, see.
- HR: And if you got an early rain-
- HR: An early rain, they rot. <sup>HCC:</sup> Even after you'd gathered them up in piles.
- HR: I know there was two years in succession ~~He~~ <sup>an</sup> lost his beans, that's the reason he went to Seattle to work to make some money because that's what you make your money on, is the beans.
- KP: The rest of the crops you just kind of broke even?
- HR: Yeah, the wheat you know, you didn't make so much on it and we didn't have so much of it. We had more beans because that way we summer fallowed the ground, you know and put wheat on it in the fall. Otherwise, you have to let the ground lay idle, you know for summer fallow if you planted beans, you know. Got a crop off of it. The last year we farmed we made good money on our beans. I think we got, I don't remember how-- we used to get just about three cents a pound for our beans, and that was a good price, you know. And that was before 1920



and shortly after 1920, and then they'd go up to maybe seven and eight cents, and boy, you got rich on beans, you know, because they yielded pretty good.

KP: Did you have to go all through the same sort of process that you did in harvesting the others?

HR: Yeah, we threshed them through the threshing machine, and at the last we'd put them through the combine, you know, just combine 'em. And so the last years--

KP: It took as much time and energy.

HR: Oh, yeah.

KP: To plant them and harvest them, they were just worth more.

HR: Yeah.

KP: Now, you were up there during the war years then?

HR: Yeah.

KP: During the First World War. How did that affect the economy? Of the farmers around here?

HR: They made more money then because the crop prices went up, see. Because they needed the wheat, you know and the stuff.

KP: This was right during the war? Or after?

HR: Right after the war, and during the war, too. That war didn't last too long, but that's when the farmers started making money, you know. Was after the war. That's when they always made their money, I guess, was during a war because--

KP: Did you have trouble getting help?

HR: No. Had help.

KP: So many men were gone. You were going to ask a question?

HCC: I was just going to ask a question-- when they had the Depression.

HR: In '29? Ivar was still living, you know. It was a bad year and

oh, that's when we went in debt. I had so many debts to pay after he died, you know. I think we were about \$7,000 in debt, but I got it all paid up.

KP: That was from the depression or was it just a bad harvest?

HR: Well, no, that was during the Depression. I sold- that first Christmas after he died and I wanted to buy the girls something for Christmas, you know, I sold about twenty-five sacks of wheat, I think, twenty-six cents a bushel! So I could buy them something for Christmas. And then otherwise I milked cows, you know, and sold the cream and sold eggs and stuff to buy the groceries with, see. I even made butter; sold butter. Come to town with my butter, everybody was following <sup>me</sup> into the store to buy my butter. (Laughter)

KP: How nice! You'll have to give me your secret recipe for making butter!

HR: I just made it like other people did, I thought, but they said it tasted so fresh and good.

KP: You hurried to town.

HR: Yes.

KP: Did you add anything when you made butter? Add salt or anything?

HR: Just salt. <sup>then</sup> You have to wash it good, you know, run a lot of water through it and you worked it with this wooden ladle, you know. You worked it good and the water would pour off and put more fresh water in til you get all the milk out of it. If you don't get the milk out of it, butter gets sour, see. You've got to work it til the water comes out clear. Then add your salt. *Work it in.*

~~HR~~: Did you use sweet cream? Or did you use sour cream?

HR: Sour cream, always used sour cream.

KP: Oh, I didn't know that either. They don't tell you things like ~~like~~ that

in these do-it-yourself books.

- HR: Well, we couldn't have sweet cream, we had no way to keep it sweet, you know. And anyway, sour cream makes better butter than sweet cream.
- HCC: We always made sour cream. Fact I didn't even know they could make butter out of sweet cream.
- HR: I didn't either. And I see in the stores, you know, "Sweet cream butter", you know. And I don't know whether it's for people that have certain diseases or what. *Have to eat that sweet cream butter.*
- I don't know, I know I wouldn't buy it unless I had to.
- KP: You wait til the cream sours, then you-
- HR: Um-huh.
- KP: -chur<sub>u</sub>ned it.
- HR: Then get all the milk out of it, you know, the buttermilk. Just run the water til it comes out clear, <sup>*after you worked it*</sup> and then <sup>*it's ready to*</sup> put salt in.
- KP: Well, no wonder, there were lots of people lined up to get your butter. Nobody'd line up for mine, I'm sure.
- HCC: I know my mother made butter and sold it, too. She made good butter, too.
- KP: Now you worked at a creamery.
- HCC: ~~W~~hen I saw some of the cream that came in I almost lost my appetite for the butter!
- HR: I never would buy creamery butter. Because I'd heard stories about creamery butter.
- KP: Like what?
- HCC: They brought in rotten cream. And then I'd heard about them drowning mice in it and take the mice out and sell the cream because they wouldn't use it at home, but they'd take it down to the creamery.
- HR: Well, I know somebody told me, it wasn't here though, but he worked, I think it was back in Wisconsin or someplace, he worked in a creamery

you know, and they found a rat in one time- <sup>and scraped the cream off of it.</sup> (Laughter) *They took it out,*  
 And so I thought, I wouldn't buy any creamery butter.

HCC: And some of that cream that came in was, I tell you, it just stunk  
 it was so rotten. I used to think, how could they ever put it  
 in with the other and make butter out of it and have it come out all  
 right. It was awful. Some of it that came in, you could just tell  
 the difference, you know. It was terrible! Then we'd dump  
 it all in the vat.

HR: We had a good place to keep the cream at our place, you know, under  
 that water tank. See they had the water tank up on top and it was  
 always cool down there.

KP: You were selling butter and milk and eggs.

HR: Butter, cream and eggs.

KP: I know you have two daughters.

HR: Um-huh.

KP: Is that all? Just the two?

HR: Just the two *girls.*

KP: So you had a whole farm to run?

HR: Um-huh.

KP: And you were making butter, cream and eggs and you had two daughters-

HR: And <sup>I</sup> always boarded the schoolteacher.

KP: And you boarded the schoolteacher?

KP: My heavens!

HR: They always boarded with me.

KP: You had plenty of room?

HR: Um-huh.

KP: You must have been near the school, too.

HR: Yeah, about a quarter of a mile the first time and then about three-

quarter of a mile after <sup>We moved</sup> <sub>^</sub> .

KP: And how many cows did you have?

HR: Oh, I milked as many as seven, eight cows.

KP: All by yourself?

HR: Um-huh.

KP: By hand?

HR: Yeah.

KP: Twice a day.

HR: Yeah.

HR: Twice a day; separated; fed the calves; took care of the chickens; fed the hogs.

KP: What did your hired men do? If they did anything!

HR: If you had hired men, they didn't do any of that kind of chores, all they did was take care of the horses and went to the field. They never did any of that other kind of chores; not even my husband because he had to be out there in the fields, too, you know, so I did all that.

KP: You were used to doing that, but you had the added burden of being alone.

HR: Yeah.

KP: The businesswoman.

HR: Yeah, after my husband died I did that, too, I never had any <sup>help</sup> <sub>^</sub> of the hired men to do any of that stuff.

KP: Did you ever have to fire them or stuff like that?

HR: No.

KP: They were pretty good guys.

HR: Yeah. Melvin worked for me and then of course, he could handle that when we weren't busy you know, but then when he'd get busy then I'd maybe have, right in bean harvest, I'd have seven or eight men, you

know, where they had to cut the beans and rake 'em and shock 'em.

KP: This was all by hand?

HR: Uh-huh.

KP: Gee, what a lot of work. No wonder beans have gone up.

HCC: And her house wasn't made for convenience either, particularly.

HR: We always had water in the house, but we couldn't drink it, you know, because it was from the pond that was seeped in through a well, you know, so we could use it for cooking or something like that, you know, and washing dishes and washing clothes, that's when we had that water tank, you know. So that was up to me too. That was quite a ways down there. And I was always the one, you know, that had to go down and start that gasoline pump to pump the water up and maybe get back up to the house and the thing would stop and had to run back down and <sup>act</sup>start <sup>ed</sup>it. Down the hill and quite a ways.

KP: What did you do for drinking water? You had a well?

HR: We had a cistern up by the house. Then we'd have to haul water in there, from town.

HCC: I guess Kelberg's the only one out there that had a well.

HR: Yeah, they're the only ones that had a well.

~~HR:~~ Where did you haul from?

HR: We hauled from town. <sup>HCC:</sup> We had regular water tanks. <sup>HR:</sup> We had the threshing machine water tank, see, <sup>HCC:</sup> and that's what they hauled the water in. You'd see 'em hauling water, the water dripping out of the tank.

KP: Hoping that you'd get half of it there? Did they have a special setup in town for people to come buy water?

HR: Yeah, they bought the water.

KP: You had to pay for the water?

HR: Oh, yeah, so much a tank. I don't remember how much it was. But everybody up there was hauling water from town.

HC: Do they still do it?

I don't know.

HR: Some people do. <sup>HC:</sup> I know up at the cemetery they have a cistern out there they haul water in that. <sup>HR:</sup> Yeah, they got no way of catching the water up there.

KP: That makes it a little hard on life, doesn't it?

HR: Yeah.

KP: Then did you have to have cars to go to town in? In the '20's or '30's?

HR: We didn't have our first car til 1924, so we'd just drive the horses. We had a good team of horses to drive. <sup>Really fast ones.</sup> That was kind of fun, too.

KP: Oh, was it?

HR: Driving the horses, yeah.

KP: Hotrodding around?

HR: Yeah.

KP: Well, when you had your daughters then, did you go to the hospital then?

HR: No.

KP: You had yours at home.

HR: Um-huh.

KP: Now, you were saying earlier as little kids, that you didn't know what was going on; did somebody give you the message before- what to expect? Now you have classes and you go in and look at everything-

HR: No, and I never went to a doctor or anything while I was pregnant.

KP: Really?

HR: Um-huh.

KP: You knew you were pregnant?

HR: I knew I was pregnant. So the doctor never knew- he was supposed to come, and Margaret was born before he ever got there!

- KP: Didn't this add a lot of extra fear?
- HR: No, didn't think anything about it. <sup>HC'</sup> Just one of those things that just happened. <sup>KP:</sup> You just sat back and relaxed.
- HCC: Course around, we'd hear- you probably did, too- the old wives would be talking about different things or when you were in a group, wouldn't they?
- HR: Yeah.
- HC: I could pick up quite a bit from just being around women. They'd talk about this and that and the morning sickness and-
- HA: And they'd be quiet, if you'd come into the room.
- KP: Were there a lot of things you weren't supposed to do and stuff like that?
- HR: I think a few days before Opal was born I helped Ivar load the <sup>bundle</sup> rack.
- KP: Oh, dear! (Laughter) You didn't relax at all? You didn't slow down?
- HR: Uh-huh.
- KP: I know my grandmother was supposed to have baked pies the morning that my uncle was born, and she hadn't finished them, so she had the baby and went back and finished them.
- HC: I know this one girl down here she thought it was because she had been eating watermelon!
- KP: Really!
- HCC: That's what they said.
- KP: I guess she thought that she'd been eating watermelon and she thought that's why she was- Nobody straightened her out?
- HCC: Apparently not.
- KR: Maybe she was surprised.
- HCC: She wasn't married. I suppose she thought she was getting bigger from the watermelons that she'd been eating, it was during watermelon time.



And the watermelon arrived squawling.

KP: No need to mention names, but was there a lot of that?

HCC: That's the only case that I knew of. There wasn't much of that- like now, was there?

HR: No.

HCC: No, they just didn't.

HR: No, you never heard of <sup>anything like</sup> that.

KP: Was that because they kept it hushed up or was it because people behaved themselves more?

HR: I don't know. I just think- well, I just think people behaved themselves more. I think so.

HCC: Yes, I do.

KP: Did your mothers tell you not to kiss a boy because- or was it- or things like that?

No. I was raised with this fear, you know, and I didn't know why.

HC: It must have been from something that was said, we just must have had kind of an impression made, some way, that there was kind of a limit to what you were to do.

HR: Yeah, but I think we just had this impression, you know that those things weren't supposed to be. Something like that doesn't happen, you know. <sup>KP:</sup> If a fellow got out of line--

HA: They didn't get out of line. No.

KP: The boys were brought just as strictly as the girls were. <sup>HR:</sup> They never had any impressions of that at all because they behaved themselves, you know.

KP: Now that; that makes a big difference, you know.

HC: If there was a girl that did get out of line, she was marked.

HA: Yeah, she was marked.

HC: Yeah, uh-huh. She was a bad girl! <sup>KP:</sup> And the whole town knew it.

- HCC: The whole town knew it, and everybody did, you know. That's the difference, I think.
- KP: The girl with the watermelon!
- I was wondering about some of the old folktales, you shouldn't go out in the moonlight when you're pregnant and things like that. I wondered if you had heard anything like that.
- HR: No, I never heard anything.
- KP: Nobody helped you with that?
- KP: Well, let's see; you had your baby before the doctor came; what did he do when he got there?
- HR: Well, Mrs. Paulsen was up there, and Carl Wesberg went and got her. They were butchering that night at our house, you know, and so Carl Wesberg had a car so he went over to Mrs. Paulsen, she lived out on Big Meadow, she was a neighbor to my folks, and got her, so she was there.
- KP: Well, that's a long distance, isn't it?
- HR: Yes, it is quite a distance.
- KP: You didn't have any immediate neighbor who-
- HR: No, I had spoken to her before about she was going to come out. So it was a good thing we had a car, you know, she just got there in time. And I had just been way down in the canyon, you know, got the cows, brought them home, you know and I think I'd milked them, too. And we just got in the house and I called for help! They were butchering.
- KP: They could hear you over the noise of the pigs? I know they make a lot of noise.
- HR: No, they were butchering a beef.
- KP: Then they could hear you. You were lucky.

- KP: Did your husband have time to go fishing?
- HR: No. My second husband he just didn't care for going camping or any-  
So I never went  
thing. fishing. We went fishing once when my first  
husband was living, went down the Clearwater, the only time we <sup>ever</sup> went  
out fishing and I didn't fish because I didn't have a fishing license.
- KP: Oh, you mean you had to have a fishing license then?
- HR: Oh, yes, had to have a fishing license and I wanted to fish so bad,  
you know, but we felt like we couldn't both <sup>?</sup> afford to have fishing  
licenses. I'd sit there and watch the fish, you know.
- KP: What were you catching, salmon?
- HR: No, they were trout. We was up on the Clearwater up on Gidney Creek.  
It was real nice trout.
- KP: That's up pretty high, isn't it?
- HR: Yes.
- KP: I'll bet you've seen a lot of changes.
- HR: Oh, yeah, sure have, <sup>KP:</sup> In this neck of the woods here, over all these  
years.  
What did Troy look like the first time you came in?
- HR: Oh, I tell you, it doesn't look like it does today. Because there  
was nothing but shacks, you might say. Just two or three good build-  
dings; there was the livery barn, I believe two livery  
Barns right on Main Street in town, and this here hotel and later  
it was the Pickett funeral home. And they had the hotel over at  
the corner, I think a fellow by the name of Charles- I believe it  
was- Charley somebody had that-
- KP: There were two hotels?
- HR: There were to hotels, but this one we stayed at was just a wooden  
hotel and that one at the corner was brick. We had a big family

and we had rooms and it was cheaper, too, you know, so we had to take the cheapest one. We had to stay overnight because we got in here at night and then the next morning we left and went out to the farm and, boy, we thought that was sure <sup>they were</sup> muddy all the way out. The streets of Troy was just- really you went clear up to the hubs of the hack that we were riding in, you know. Terrible. And I thought-

KP: How did the horses move in it?

HR: They were up to their knees in mud. I thought if this is the town what's the country like?

KP: Were the country roads like that?

HR: They weren't that bad; they were muddy but they weren't that bad. But it took so long to get out there because it was muddy, you know, and the horses couldn't travel fast, just went in a walk all the way you know. And we were so surprised when we got out to see what that house looked like. Dad hadn't told us what the house looked like. Just boards up and down with battings on the cracks!

KP: Was your mother disappointed?

HR: Oh, no, she wasn't disappointed. She was just anxious to get at it.

KP: To start scrubbing it.

HR: Yeah. I know we all papered <sup>I think</sup> til we had it all fixed up for Christmas. <sup>KP:</sup> That was pretty fast. Was it a pretty good sized house.

HR: Yeah, it was. It was a big bedroom downstairs, big living room and good sized dining room, good sized kitchen and there was three bedrooms upstairs. Pretty good sized.

KP: A little doubling up then with twelve kids.

HR: Yes. <sup>KP:</sup> And then you said that you and two of your sisters went to Spokane?

HR: Uh-huh.

- KP: Almost right away?
- HR: Yeah. And the <sup>youngest</sup> sister was only fifteen; she could do housework, too, you know.
- KP: And there were no labor laws then to keep her-
- HR: No, no labor laws.
- KP: Melvin was saying, maybe because he was a boy, your parents were real strict on how they raised you. Do you remember your folks being that strict?
- HR: Oh, yeah; Dad wasn't that strict, he never spanked us. He never laid a hand on us, but mother did the spanking. And boy, we got spanked for things we never done, too! (Chuckles)
- KP: Yeah, but I imagine it came out about even by the time you got done too. (Laughter)
- HR: <sup>First one she could grab got the licking.</sup> That's what Mother said about her dad, he said, "Well, if you didn't <sup>He!</sup> deserve it this time, save it til when you do!" He had twelve kids too.
- KP: It must get awfully hectic, that many.
- HCC: The bigger kids ~~take~~ care of the littler kids, they got along pretty good. The older ones would take care of the next ones and on down the line, so it wasn't much harder on the parents, I guess, than-
- KP: ~~They~~ were all spread out pretty much. <sup>HR:</sup> When Mother'd go to town, you know, it would take a whole day to go to town and drive a horse, you know, and I took care of the kids and did the cooking and she never worried at all, even leave the tiny baby at home with me to take care of. She never worried at all, because she knew they were taken care of.
- HCC: Did she let you milk, though? Did she let you milk out here?
- HR: I never did much milking. <sup>He!</sup> I know she wouldn't let the other kids, but Ed did because she could depend on him.

because she thought he didn't get all the milk, they'd milk the cows dry. But in North Dakota where we lived there was a watering trough by the barn where they'd pump the water in, you know, so when he thought he didn't have enough milk he'd put the pail under the waterspout and put a little water in there so <sup>Mama</sup> was going to think he got all the milk! (Chuckles)

KP: Ah! Filled the bucket. So that was the important job, it wasn't a chore, it was important.

HR: It was important, it sure was. You had to milk the cows dry.

KP: So, if you didn't let the kids it was because you didn't trust 'em?

HC: I think we told you about the time that Melvin went out to work for that person-

KP: Yeah.

HC: Got all the dirt in the bucket so they wouldn't ask him to milk anymore! (Chuckles)

KP: Yeah, he told the farmer he really knew how to milk good. He really could do a good job, and so he messed it up and threw straw in it and took them in this little bottom of a bucket, and it was all dirty. And said, "See how good I milked!" And the farmer said, "Forget it!" He thought he could milk, see. He really did know how to milk, though.

HCC: Oh, yeah, you bet.

HR: Margaret would help me <sup>out there</sup> on the farm but Opal never could learn how to milk. Margaret was a good milker. She sure was and she was only just about eight years, you know, get out there and help me milk.

KP: I guess that was kind of like spending money, wasn't it?

HR: Yeah. <sup>KP:</sup> Your milk.

HCC: I know I milked at home, I was milking cows, too. But not til I got down here, because my dad had wild cattle, they'd take 'em off

the range. They were really killers to begin with, and then afterward he went into jerseys and they were alright, but those that he first had, I remember one of 'em was a great big red one and one was a great big black cow, and they had to hobble 'em to milk, because they kicked like mules. And Dad was the only one that could handle them. If he'd get someone in to milk, they'd kick the daylight out of 'em!

HR: Well, you know, the cows were so used to Mama that she was the only one that could milk 'em. So when Ed started in- <sup>he put a dress on.</sup> (all talking and laughing at the same time)

KP: Oh, how did he stand it? Poor fellow.

HC: The cows will reach back and smell who's there, they could smell ~~the~~ mother's dress so. They could tell even by the feeling, you know, the way they handle them, but they'd come back with it's nose and smell, you know. <sup>KP:</sup> A little rougher than what they're used to, you know. <sup>HC:</sup> They're smart.

KP: There's quite a few years aren't there spread out there between Ed and the youngest little girl? Wasn't he in his twenties?

HR: He was about twenty-two when Fern was born because he was twenty when he came out here and she was born two years afterwards.

KP: So they had plenty of help.

HR: Course Fern was born when we were working in Spokane, you know, we weren't home.

KP: Did you know that there was another one on the way?

HR: Oh, yes. But she never mentioned it to us but we could tell, of course. We thought, my goodness, another one, you know! <sup>HC:</sup> In fact she thought she had a tumor and she told it in front of the ~~the~~ that she had a tumor and was going to have to have an operation and

pretty soon she quit talking about it and Mother wondered how come  
and then the tumor arrived!

HR: I never heard about that.

END OF TAPE

Transcribed by Frances Rawlins, December 29, 1977

HCC: She'd tell that she had a tumor and she guessed she'd  
have to have an operation. In mix crowds, she'd talk about  
she'd have to have an operation. And all of a sudden, we  
heard nothing more about the tumor. And I remember  
Mother's wondering...